THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES
Advisers to the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine

Policy and Global Affairs Division
Fellowships Office

September 2006

Dear Graduate Admissions Committee:

We are writing to recommend Mr. Tuan Anh Cao for admission to your graduate program in Computer and Information Sciences. Our recommendation is the result of a careful evaluation of Mr. Cao's academic credentials and a technical interview conducted by a panel of U.S. faculty in Vietnam. We performed this review in support of the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) Fellowship Program, administered through the National Academies.

VEF is a special program enacted by the U.S. Congress to help build excellence in science and technology in Vietnam. The National Academies and VEF are working in a partnership to achieve this goal. Together, they seek out the most competitive young Vietnamese scholars for graduate training at leading U.S. institutions. VEF has established a formal alliance with more than 100 research-intensive universities to welcome these scholars and cost-share their training.

This year, approximately 1200 individuals applied to the VEF Fellowship Program. After a competitive process of standardized testing and an evaluation of academic credentials, the top 54 candidates were personally interviewed by National Academies' panels in Vietnam. A summary of the selection process is attached. From these interviews, conducted during early September, we identified a select number of candidates whom we consider highly qualified for graduate studies at top U.S. universities. Mr. Cao is one of these outstanding scholars.

Mr. Cao is a talented student who exudes impressive drive and passion for the practical computer science work that he has been doing. His English is outstanding, far better than most new-to-US students from eastern Asia. On the other hand, he needs to develop better skill at presenting his work, clearly identifying the key ideas among the details.

Given Mr. Cao's excellent undergraduate record, his significant practical experience, and his passion and drive, we believe that he has good potential to succeed in a strong PhD program, especially if he broadens and deepens his understanding of fundamental computer science along the way.

On behalf of VEF and the National Academies, we hope you will consider this application favorably. By admitting Mr. Cao you will have established a linkage with VEF, the National Academies, and the U.S. government in the development of a new generation of scientists and engineers who will contribute to the future success of Vietnam.

Most sincerely yours,

Chandrajit Bajaj
Computational Applied Mathematics Chair
  in Visualization
Professor of Computer Sciences
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